



## California Public Utilities Commission

505 Van Ness Ave, San Francisco, CA 94102 - [www.cpuc.ca.gov](http://www.cpuc.ca.gov)

**Local Government Newsletter** No. 10 Jan. 2005

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**This newsletter is intended to inform you about recent actions undertaken and issues pending before the CPUC that may affect your community.**

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### **Statewide Interest**

**New!** **Broadband use** - The CPUC will hold a **Full Panel Hearing on the draft report entitled "Broadband Deployment in California"** released on February 1. The draft report discusses broadband services, technologies and deployment in California. The hearing will be an opportunity for broadband providers, community-based organizations, educators and other interested parties to comment on the draft report, and on the issues addressed therein. There will be a public comment segment. **Tuesday, February 8, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. CPUC Auditorium, 505 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco.** The report, more information about the hearing and other documents are posted on the Commission's website. Here's the link: [http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/static/\\_spotlight/050202\\_broadbandfph.htm](http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/static/_spotlight/050202_broadbandfph.htm)

**New!** **CPUC will hold a public meeting on climate change and opportunities for utilities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.** Chaired by Commission President Mike Peevey, the purpose of this meeting is to move beyond energy procurement and to begin to identify best practices for all CPUC regulated companies (electric, natural gas, telecommunications, water, and transportation). Opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions related to business operations include fleet vehicle efficiency, building efficiencies, and overall reduction of energy consumption. Invited presenters include representatives from academic, research, business, insurance, shareholder activist, and state government organizations. The CPUC regulated companies will be prepared to present their current and anticipated efforts to address climate change. **Wednesday, February 23, 2005, 9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m., CPUC Auditorium, 505 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, 94102.** More information: <http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/static/industry/electric/climate+change/index.htm>

**Reminder!** **Rural Telecommunications Infrastructure Grants Program** –The CPUC is now accepting applications for the Rural Telecommunications Infrastructure Grants Program. Grants of up to \$2.5 Million per project are available to low-income rural communities currently without basic phone service. **Phase 1 Applications are due by February 15, 2005.** More information on the program can be found at the link below, and by contacting the Project Manager, Mary Jo Borak at [bor@cpuc.ca.gov](mailto:bor@cpuc.ca.gov). More information: [http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/static/\\_spotlight/telcorural.htm](http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/static/_spotlight/telcorural.htm)

**Those interested in energy efficiency. Reminder!** **Workshops to discuss updating energy efficiency policy rules** that will provide direction to future administrators for programs implemented in 2006 and beyond are scheduled for February 15 and 16 from 9:30 am to 5 pm at the Commission's training room at 505 Van Ness Avenue. Here's a link to the ruling: <http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/PUBLISHED/RULINGS/42352.htm>. Also, the Administrative Law Judge has drafted updated policy rules to be discussed at the February 15 and 16 workshops. Here's a link to that ruling: <http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/PUBLISHED/RULINGS/42616.htm>. **Update!** The Commission determined that the investor owned utilities will be responsible for program choice and portfolio management since they are responsible for providing their customers reliable service, and just and reasonable rates. The Commission as part of its policy oversight responsibility may establish parameters for program choice

and portfolio management. Decision D.05-01-055. **Reminder!** Information is being requested in response to the Governor's "Green Buildings Executive Order." Generally, the order requires investments in energy efficiency for state-owned buildings and encourages cities, counties and private business to reduce energy use by 10% per square foot by 2010 and by 20% by 2015. Interested parties should submit comments to the Commission by February 4, 2005. Here's a link to the Commission ruling: <http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/PUBLISHED/RULINGS/42569.htm>. (proceeding R.01-08-028).

**Update!** The Telecommunications Bill of Rights for consumers has been stayed - to allow adequate time to address implementation issues, to ensure that California's consumer protection structure will be viable and enforceable, and to consider a broader re-examination of policy issues. However telecommunications carriers must continue to comply with all rules and laws currently in place, including rules on slamming (which is the unauthorized switching of service) and cramming (which is placing unauthorized charges on the bill). The suspension will be in effect until a new decision is issued no later than the end of 2005, which will adopt a consumer protection structure. (proceeding R.00-02-004). Decision: D.05-01-058.

**New!** Free low-income energy-saving devices. Energy utilities regulated by the CPUC have low-income energy efficiency programs in which consumers, who qualify under the low-income discount program referred to as the CARE program, and seniors and disabled consumers, who earn slightly more than the CARE income limits, may get energy saving devices for free. Consumers can call their energy utilities for more information. Also, consumers are asking us if vendors who have approached them about the programs are legitimate. Advise your constituents that the vendor must provide the name of the utility with which it has contracted. Also, utilities keep lists of which vendors are on contract and if in doubt, consumers may call the utility before agreeing to the vendors' offers. Following are the five largest energy utilities' phone numbers for their low-income programs:

- Pacific Gas & Electric – 1-800-933-9555
- Southern California Edison – 1-800-736-4777
- San Diego Gas and Electric – 1-800-411-7343
- Sierra Pacific – 1-800-782-2506
- Southern California Gas – 1-800-331-7593

**New!** The CPUC Work Plan is now available and posted on our website. It generally describes the work the CPUC expects to accomplish during 2005. It also contains a list of current and anticipated formal proceedings of broad interest. Here's the link to the Work Plan: <http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/PUBLISHED/REPORT/43408.htm>.

**New!** The CPUC continues its efforts to clamp down on illegal movers. For example, the CPUC had telephone service shut off to Pronto Moving Services, based in **Hayward**. The company's owner, Marco Patino, has since April 2004 transported consumers' household belongings without a valid permit. Further, Pronto has used a bogus permit number "Lic # 131563," in its Yellow Page advertisements. In another case, the Commission required Israel Lerner and VIP Relocation, which operates out of the **San Fernando Valley**, to pay restitution to past customers and a fined the company for past unlawful operations.

People who are planning on moving from one residence to another in California should get from the mover the booklet, "Important Information For Persons Moving Household Goods." We also suggest that people check to see whether their potential moving company is licensed with the CPUC before they contract with the company by calling us at 800-877-8867. If anyone has a complaint about a move that cannot be resolved with the mover, call us at 800-366-4782 to file a complaint.

## **Southern California Interest**

**New!** Last month Regina Birdsell joined the CPUC to build working relationships with business and civic leaders primarily throughout Southern California. Birdsell served as Director of the Office of Ratepayer Advocates (ORA) for several years and is looking forward to hearing from you about policy and regulatory initiatives that matter to you. She can be reached at (213) 576-7509 or via e-mail at [rbirdsell@cpuc.ca.gov](mailto:rbirdsell@cpuc.ca.gov).

## **Northern California Interest**

**New!** **PG&E Municipal Departing Load customers may see changes in their E-Depart and E-Exempt rates.** Those are customers (also referred to as Departing Load or DL) that transfer from PG&E to a municipal-owned utility, irrigation district or similar governmental agency that sells and delivers electricity to consumers. PG&E has been authorized to bill them for Nuclear Decommissioning (ND) and Public Purpose Program (PPP) charges until superseding tariffs have been approved or until it has been determined that DL customers' obligations to pay such charges have ended. However, PG&E is not authorized to bill the ongoing Competition Transition Charge (CTC) or the Regulatory Asset (RA) charge through Schedule E-DEPART until issues regarding the Cost Responsibility Surcharge (CRS) have been resolved. More information: [http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/PUBLISHED/FINAL\\_RESOLUTION/43457.htm](http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/PUBLISHED/FINAL_RESOLUTION/43457.htm)

**New!** **Ponderosa Water (Tehama County)** customers will see a 136% increase in their water bills. Ponderosa serves 95 residential customers in and around Ponderosa Sky Ranch in Tehama County. Ponderosa's present rates became effective September 5, 2000. The quarterly bill of 3,840 cubic feet will increase from \$61.52 to \$119.65. More information: Resolution RW-4518. Link to the draft resolution - [http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/PUBLISHED/AGENDA\\_RESOLUTION/43292.htm](http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/PUBLISHED/AGENDA_RESOLUTION/43292.htm)

**New!** **Beasore Meadows Water Company (Madera County)** will increase rates 78%. Beasore serves 65 customers that reside about 20 miles from Bass Lake in Madera County. The last general rate increase was granted on September 25, 1992. The annual bill for a home will increase from \$129 to \$230. More information RW-4511. Link to the draft resolution - [http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/PUBLISHED/AGENDA\\_RESOLUTION/41971.htm](http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/PUBLISHED/AGENDA_RESOLUTION/41971.htm).

**Reminder!** **Local elected officials may be interested in the PG&E rate change proposal and the public hearings scheduled for it.** Last May, the Commission approved revenue increases for PG&E in the amount of \$236 million in electric distribution revenues, \$52 million in gas distribution revenues, and \$38 million in generation revenues. Now the Commission is considering how to set the utility's rates to recover its costs. Public Participation Hearings, where consumers may express concern or ask questions, are scheduled. See the community calendar in this newsletter for specific time and locations of the hearings (proceeding A.04-07-044).

**New!** **A hearing in Keene has been scheduled** for Feb. 7 for Union Pacific Railroad's request to increase rates for its Keene Water System. See the Community Calendar for time and location (proceeding A.04-11-004).

## **Upcoming Commission business meetings – Thu. Feb. 10, Thu. Feb. 24, Thu Mar 17**

Most items discussed at the meetings are distributed publicly 30 days in advance of the respective meeting. Read, print and download decisions that are issued through our “Official Documents” page, selecting “Currently Open for Comment.” Here’s the link to the official documents page: <http://www.cpuc.ca.gov/static/official+docs/index.htm>. The Agenda for a business meeting is posted on the website 10 days before a meeting and at the meeting you may comment on most items on the agenda. Contact the Public Advisor for specifics. Here’s a link to the website. <http://www.cpuc.ca.gov>.

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### **February Community Calendar**

Here is a list of workshops and public meetings, which your community may want to follow or participate in. Since items could be added or removed daily, you may want to access our **daily calendar** for complete information. Also you can get on the “Information Only” list for any of our proceedings and be notified of meetings, ruling and decisions on the proceedings you select. Also if you have any questions, contact our **Public Advisor’s Office**.

Tue., Feb. 1, 6 pm  
Public Participation  
Hearing

The public is invited to attend and comment on changes to PG&E’s rates to recover increased costs previously approved in May 2004. **Commission Auditorium, 505 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco.**

Wed., Feb.2, 7 pm  
Public Participation  
Hearing

The public is invited to attend and comment on changes to PG&E’s rates to recover increased costs previously approved in May 2004. **Santa Rosa City Hall Council Chamber, 100 Santa Rosa Ave., Santa Rosa.**

Thu., Feb.3, 7 pm  
Public Participation  
Hearing

The public is invited to attend and comment on changes to PG&E’s rates to recover increased costs previously approved in May 2004. **Sheriff’s Auditorium, 55 West Younger Ave., San Jose.**

Mon., Feb. 7, 4 pm  
Public Participation  
Hearing

The public is invited to attend and comment on changes to PG&E’s rates to recover increased costs previously approved in May 2004. **Tulare Public Library’s Centennial Room, 113 North F Street, Tulare**

Mon., Feb 7, 7 pm to 9 pm  
Public Participation  
Hearing

The public is invited to attend and comment on the request of Union Pacific Railroad Company, Keene Water System to increase rates. **Stonybrook Administrative Building, Conference Room, La Paz, 29700 Woodford-Tehachapi Road, Keene.**

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**A word about our website:** CPUC posts its public documents on its website. Access them by searching through the Official Documents page (link on the left) or by using the search engine linked on the right. If you want information about participating in formal proceedings, the [Public Advisor’s page](#) can help you (link under “quick hits”). The [home page](#) lists information in the CPUC spotlight and provides links to special announcements on other important issues. A [Consumer Information Center](#) (link on the left) contains information about utility programs the Commission has authorized. The [News Room](#) (link on left) provides press releases and other information to the media. Our [industry divisions](#) have posted numerous industry-related decisions, presentations, reports and other information on their pages (see Regulated Areas selection on the left).

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If you have problems finding the documents you need, call or e-mail us and we’ll help you.

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If you have questions about anything in this newsletter, please e-mail Kyle DeVine at [kyl@cpuc.ca.gov](mailto:kyl@cpuc.ca.gov). If you wish to participate in a CPUC proceeding, have questions about a proceeding, want to automatically receive CPUC-issued documents, or want to comment at a Commission meeting, our Public Advisor's Office is here to help.

Contact us at:

San Francisco Office: 866-849-8390, or [public.advisor@cpuc.ca.gov](mailto:public.advisor@cpuc.ca.gov)

Los Angeles Office: 866-849-8391, or [public.advisor.la@cpuc.ca.gov](mailto:public.advisor.la@cpuc.ca.gov)

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While waiting for...

Electricity Demand Response Challenge

(words can be written diagonally, bottom to top, backwards or straight)

Y	C	N	E	I	C	I	F	F	E
G	N	I	L	C	Y	C	O	O	L
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N	L	A	C	B	E	Y	S	A	T
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L	V	Y	E	M	A	Y	R	T	C
K	A	T	W	T	F	F	E	R	S
D	L	I	O	M	E	M	A	J	H
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- Cycling
- Day Ahead
- Demand
- Efficiency
- Electric
- Energy
- Load
- Meter
- Off Peak
- Thermostat